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THESES ON THE TRUTH OF PENTA- TEUCHAL HISTORY.

Delivered by DR. FRANZ DELITZSCH to his English Exegetical Society.

I.

The books of the prophets of the VIIIth century—before the deuteronomic reformation of King Josiah—are of like importance for the critical questions about the Mosaic history and legislation, with the undoubted epistles of St. Paul for the history and literature of the New Testament.

II.

We allow that the Mosaic law has gone through a successive development, but we maintain at the same time that the prophets of the middle royal age bear witness to the wonderful origin of Israel as the people of law, and to the divine character of this law, on the basis of which God has made a covenant with his people after its miraculous redemption from Egypt.

III.

The leading out of Israel was accompanied with miracles; for Micah VII. 15 says, "According to the days of thy coming out of Egypt will I shew him marvelous things." The meaning is that, according to a divine law of redemption-history, its beginning and its end shall resemble each other by the unique self-manifestation of God. The same prophet testifies that Moses with Aaron and Miriam was the mediator of that redemption, for the Lord says by the same prophet, VI. 4, "I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed thee out of the house of servants and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron and Miriam." Evidently Micah means Miriam as the prophetess who accompanied the song of praise on the other side of the sea with the timbrel in her hand, and Aaron as the high priest of the people.

IV.

That the Sinai has been the centre of the revelation of God, which followed the redemption from Egypt, is confirmed by indisputable testimony, which is even older than the prophets of the VIIIth century, namely by the Song of Deborah, Judges v. 4, 5. The divine promise by Haggai, II. 5, "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth," looks back to the marvelous phenomena of the Sinaitic legislation. Compare Hebrews XII. 26, 27.

V.

Even richer than the book of Micah are the books of Amos and Hosea, the prophets of the northern kingdom, in historical retrospects. Amos says, II. 10, "I brought you up from the land of Egypt and led you forty years through the wilderness to possess the land of Amorite; and I raised up your sons for prophets, and of your sons for Nazarites." That not only the post-Mosaic time, but first of all the Mosaic time itself was of such prophetic richness, the Babylonian Isaiah testifies, as if commenting on that passage of Amos; for he laments, asking, LXII. 11, "Where is he that brought thee up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?" that is, within the people of the age of Moses.

VI.

That a revealed law was the basis of God's covenant with Israel is a presupposition with the prophets. "Set the trumpet to thy mouth," says the Lord to Hosea, VIII. 1, "and come as an eagle over the house of Israel, because they have transgressed my covenant and trespassed my law." There is consequently a correlation between the covenant and the law as its record. The same prophet says VI. 7, "They like men (or like Adam) have transgressed the covenant," and VIII. 12, "I have written unto him the great things of my law (or perhaps better: May I write to him myriads of my law), they were counted as a strange thing." There the prophet conceives the law as a written document, which, though it were even much larger than it is, would be considered by Ephraim as null and void.

Remark: Modern critics conclude from Jeremiah VII. 22, that the law of covenant was merely ethical, with exclusion of sacrificial commandments. But this conclusion is improbable in itself and inconsistent with the relation of Jeremiah's preaching to Deuteronomy.

VII.

We commend these statements of the prophets of the VIIIth century to the consideration of those, whose conscience is alarmed by the modern inquiry concerning the Pentateuch. Firstly, these results have not mathematical certainty. Secondly, they cannot shake the great facts of the Old Testament, which the New Testament supposes as premises of itself. Thirdly, if it is not demonstrable that the whole Tora as we have it before us, is immediately Mosaic, yet it remains true that the Sinaitic law is a revelation from God, although only a preparatory and imperfect one, and that Jesus Christ, as the immediate and full revelation of God, is the end of the law. He is the antitype of the sacrifices and of the high priest of the law; and he has abrogated by fulfilment not only the law of the oldest and youngest parts of the middle books of the Pentateuch, but also of Deuteronomy and even of Ezekiel.

THE gates of the Talmud are being more and more opened to general students by systematic books of all kinds. None of these books are, perhaps, more useful to this end than the *Aruch Completum*, etc., by Dr. Alexander Kohut, which to date has reached the term *הרדפה*; the *Neuhebraeisches und Chaldaeisches Woerterbuch ueber die Talmudim und Midraschim*, etc., by Dr. J. Levy, which has reached to *נשואין*; and *Real-Encyclopaedie fuer Bibel und Talmud*, by Dr. J. Hamburger, which has reached to *Sprichwort*. The former are eminent lexica, and of great value to students of the Talmud. The latter, however, is a gigantic piece of work, of immediate use to all kinds of students who seek correct information in the ancient Jewish literature. This work, when finished, will be an index to all branches of knowledge found in the Talmud, and afford the reader a clear insight into it by the numerous passages quoted and expounded, and will be an indispensable hand-book for preachers, teachers, writers on theology, history and the kindred branches. These three works are issued regularly as fast as they can be printed.—*American Israelite*.